

be done. Thus out of twenty small excreta picked up at random in the Chiriinda Forest and containing various remains, eighteen (a proportion that astounded me) proved to contain the scales and small wing-fragments of Lepidoptera, and in several cases these were indistinguishable under the microscope from those of *Mycalesis campina*, a butterfly that was present at the moment in considerable numbers. The examination of large numbers of excreta, particularly when, as at the nest, the bird can be identified, appears to me as likely to be a somewhat useful line of research.

XXXI.—THE PROGRESS AND CONDITION OF THE
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM AT WASHINGTON.*

THE final accession of birds in 1910-11 from the Smithsonian African Expedition comprised 1,379 dried skins and 213 alcoholic specimens, skeletons, and eggs, and supplied many desiderata, of which the most important was the Shoebill, *Balaniceps rex*, a form not hitherto represented in any American museum. It also contained examples of other genera new to the collection, including *Anastomus*, *Dicrocerus*, *Macrodipteryx*, *Scotornis*, *Cryptorhina*, *Sorella*, and *Elminia*, and of numerous species and subspecies now first obtained from this source. Ninety skins of Chinese birds were received from the Museum of Comparative Zoology in exchange; and 83 skins from Luzon, Philippine Islands, were presented by Dr. H. C. Curl, United States Navy. The last consignment from the Java Expedition of Mr. Owen Bryant, consisting of skins, nests, and eggs, contained several examples of the interesting Weaver-birds (Ploceidæ). Skins of North and Central American species to the number of 1,210, among which are many well-prepared specimens

* Extracted from the "Report and Condition of the U.S. National Museum for the year ending June 30, 1911." Washington: Government Printing Office. 1911.

of water-birds and waders, were obtained from Mr. Edward J. Brown, of Washington, partly by gift and partly by purchase. In the course of a hunting trip to the coast of South Carolina near Charleston, lasting five weeks, Dr. E. A. Mearns (United States Army), Mr. J. H. Riley, and Mr. E. J. Brown made for the Museum an interesting collection consisting of 607 skins, 52 eggs, and 2 nests, including topotypes of numerous species originally described from the drawings of Mark Catesby. Several important forms new to the Museum and desired for the exhibition series were purchased. Among them are two Birds of Paradise, *Astrapia rothschildi* and *Parotia carolæ*, a Hornbill, *Rhyticeros narcondami*, a Jay, *Lalocitta lidthi*, and specimens of *Globicera wilkesi*, *Globicera auroræ*, and other species from Polynesia.

The reserve collection of bird-skins and eggs occupies 420 large standard cases. The rearrangement of the skins, which had become exceedingly crowded in their quarters in the Smithsonian building, was completed for 96 cases, 52 of which were also furnished with case labels. Labels indicating the contents of each drawer were prepared for the North American eggs, and a beginning was made in assembling the data for those required for the skins. Specimen labels were written for about 2,700 skins. Some 3,500 mounted specimens withdrawn from exhibition several years ago were examined, and those considered desirable to return to the reserve series were set aside for dismounting. About 30 types reclaimed from the general collection were suitably labelled and placed in the type cases. The alcoholic specimens, now stored on the ground floor in the same compartment as the reptiles, were extensively renovated and rearranged, and much was done toward completing their labelling and recording. The collection of skeletons, skulls, and sterna remains to be overhauled. The card catalogue serving as an index to the alcoholic specimens and skeletons has, to a large extent, been verified and the nomenclature revised.

The curator of the division, Mr. Robert Ridgway, completed the manuscript of Part 5 of the Museum Bulletin 50, entitled "The Birds of North and Middle America," and by the close of the year the printing of this volume was well advanced. He also made considerable progress in the arrangement of the data for Part 6 of the same work. Dr. E. A. Mearns continued the preparation of his report on the birds collected by the Smithsonian African Expedition, and Mr. William Palmer devoted some time to working up the birds obtained in Java by Mr. Owen Bryant and himself. Mr. A. C. Bent, of Taunton, Massachusetts, who, at his own expense, is proceeding with the work on the "Life Histories of North American Birds," begun by Major Bendire and continued by Dr. Ralph, examined material at the Museum and made one or more field trips during the year.

The collections of the division were consulted by members of the staff of the Biological Survey and by many ornithologists from different parts of the country and from abroad. Among the latter may be mentioned Mr. W. E. Clyde Todd, of the Carnegie Museum; Mr. Witmer Stone, Curator of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; Mr. Frank M. Chapman and Mr. W. de W. Miller, of the American Museum of Natural History; Dr. Glover M. Allen and Mr. William Brewster, of the Museum of Comparative Zoology; Mr. Charles B. Cory and Mr. W. H. Osgood, of the Field Museum of Natural History; Mr. B. H. Swales, of Grosse Ile, Michigan; Dr. L. C. Sanford, of New Haven, Connecticut; Mr. Abbott H. Thayer, of Monadnock, New Hampshire; Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, and Rear-Admiral R. E. Peary, United States Navy, of Washington; Hon. Dean C. Worcester, Secretary of the Interior of the Philippine Islands; Mr. Anastasio Alfaro, Director of the Museo Nacional, San José, Costa Rica; and Mr. J. H. Fleming, of Toronto, Canada.